SHRI NURMAL CHATTERJEE; I have aske^ for a comparison bat-ween diesei and steam. I am not comparing it with electric traction. That I know. I have. mentioned in the past also elsewheire for instaiice...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let thg Minister answer. He has not finished.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: We do consider that the operations wouM be far more efficient if we convert steam into electric and dlesel an(i phase out thg steam locomotives as soon as possible becauge there are all SOT'S Of maintenance pi'oblems and other problemg which arisg which end up in a much higher cost of running the steam locomotive fleet.

Foreign Airlines operating through Calcutta

*206. SHRI SUKOMAL SEN; Will the Minister of TRANSPOR!T be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of foreign airlines operating through Calcutta airport;

(b)i what are the flightg of Air India operating through Calrutta and their destinations-

(c) whether Government have entered into any agreement withany. more foreign airlines for their operation though Calcutta; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Six xoreign airlines namely, Aeroflot, Thai Airways, Banglade*' Biman, 'Royal Nepal Airlines, Drufc Air (Bhutan) and Surma airways are operating to/through Calcutta air port.

(b) Details of operations' of • Air India flishts to/from/through Calcutta. _

Sl. No.	Flight Number	Route
1	AI-316/Tuesday/Wednesday. . .	Bombay/Calcutta/Bangkok/Hongkong/ Tokyo.
2	AI-307/Wednesday/Thursday . . .	Tokyo/Osaka/Hongkong/Bangkok/ Calcutta/Bombay.
3	AI-132/Monday	London/Rome/Delhi/Bombay/Calcutta.
4	AI-103/Tuesday	Calcutta/Bombay/Dubai/London/New York.
5	AI-109/Thursday/Friday	Calcutta/Bombay/Dubai/London/New York.
6	AI-164/Wednesday/Thursday . . .	Paris/Frankfurt/Delhi/Bombay/ Calcutta.

(c)i and (d) BALKAN ^Bulgarian Airlines), LOT (Polish Airline.^) and Singapore Airlineg have been given rights to operate to Calcutta in the recent past.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN; This question had been discusser earlier also.

Sir, not on'y the people of Eastern India but people from other parts also feel that Calcutta airport is verjr much neglected and ;hat is being neglected wilfully For example, I would quote from Hindustan Times Delhi edition of 23rd August.where it sayg: General Manager, International; Air-

port Authority *ai* Inoia narrates a different story altogether. According to him, the growth rate of international air passengers in Calcutta airport, in April i985 compared to that •of April 1984 was the highest in the country. It was 13 per rent while in Bombay it was 2.6 per cent and Delhi 5 per cent odd. In comparison to this, Calcutta had the highest traffic. Then the General Manager says: During the pagt two :\'ears, Calcutta recorded thg highest growth rate of internatiohal passengers. His estimate wag that international passenger traffic through Calcutta will rise further.

In view of the statement by the Genera] Manager of flntemational Airports Authority of India, jjublish-ed in Hindustan- Times, Calcutta airport ig wilfully neglected. In the - statement made it appears that even Air India is neglecting Calcutta airport. I would like to know from the hon. Minister apart from o'.her airlines, whether he wishes I0 introduce some rnore Air India flightg to West .ancj Gulf countries in the East.

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: The number of flights that Air Hidia ope rates through Calcutta is sufficient and it i£ wrong to gay that we are neg lecting Calcutta airport. I do not knOw from where the hon. Member got the information that he has. I can give you some details. In Calcutta, in 1982-'13, the number of passengers who travelled, was 15,06,505. In 1983-84 the number wag l'i,5'2,Otl3. In 1984-85 the number was 18.58.923. Now, there are certain reasons why Calcutta is not being used by many other airlines. There is the economic condition of the Sta'e of West Bengal and also industrial decline. The hon. Member must know this also that with regard to number of people who liire going to Gulf, practically there is hardly any traffic from West Bengal. Anothfer very important point is that We have got the latest aircraft which Can fly directly, for example from Frankfurt? to Hong Kong. Earlier, they used to have aircraft which had to have a refuelling centre at Calcutta. What can we do if latest aircraft have comg in today? And you will be surprised—I am going *a.* little out of the question—that facilities provided for the International Airport Authority as well as to the Indian Airlines as algo the navigational facilities that we have provided for Calcutta, are more than enough to see that present requirement is met. We are doing everything possible under the gun to see that Calcutta airport is used. Even out of 19 airlines which have got contract with our country to fly and use Calcutta airport, only five arg flying and the rest do not. We can force them to put a clause to use Calcutta airport but We cannot force them on • operational basis.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN: The answer says that BALKAN, LOT and Singapore Airlines have been given rights to operate to Calcutta. But still it is not a sufficient operation. Last year also, his predecessor wrote to me that airlines arg going to operate but still they are "ot operating. What is the reason for it and what is delaying the operations? I would also like to know from the hon. Minister as to v^hich other airlines have been oiteved to operate through Calcutta.

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: A state-jnent has already been made that 19' airlines have been allowed. The countries which have been allowed to operate through Calcutta are, Lebanese, Netherlandis, Iraq. Australia, USA, Poland. U. K., Canada, Scandinavian countries, Ghana, Nigeria. Philippines, Burma, Aeroflot, Thai Airways, Bangladesh Biman, Royal Nepal Airlines and out of that only five are Operating, that ig, Druk Air, Royal Nepal Airlines, Bangladesh Bimaa, Thai Airways an^ Aeroflot. We are also having negotiations with one or two more countries and one of the conditions which we are tr.ying to put is that they should touch Calcutta...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is: over.